

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 10, 2003

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2003–04 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Joint Resolution

No. 4

Introduced by Assembly Member Mountjoy

January 27, 2003

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 4—Relative to the National Slave Memorial Act.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 4, as amended, Mountjoy. The National Slave Memorial Act.

This measure would urge the Congress of the United States to pass H.R. 196, the National Slave Memorial Act.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The National Slave Memorial Act (H.R. 196) was
2 introduced in the House of Representatives on January 7, 2003, to
3 authorize the Secretary of the Interior to establish a memorial to
4 slavery in the District of Columbia; and

5 WHEREAS, Slavery influenced 250 years of American history
6 and was a major cause of our bloodiest war, and while the past 50
7 years have seen great advances made to unify our nation, slavery
8 and those who suffered under its injustice remain in a shadow; and

9 ~~WHEREAS, The image of a slave is one that not only must be~~
10 ~~remembered, but also must be respected, and a slave memorial will~~
11 ~~play a role in healing the legacy of slavery; and~~

12 *WHEREAS, The long and horrible nightmare of slavery in this*
13 *country's history is a national blight that must never be forgotten,*

1 *and a slave memorial will play a role in healing the terrible legacy*
 2 *of slavery in the United States; and*

3 *WHEREAS, Slavery was a grave injustice that caused African*
 4 *Americans to suffer enormous damages and losses, both material*
 5 *and intangible, including the loss of human dignity and liberty, the*
 6 *frustration of careers and professional lives, and the long-term*
 7 *loss of income and opportunity; and*

8 *WHEREAS, Slavery in the United States denied African*
 9 *Americans the fruits of their own labor and was an immoral and*
 10 *inhumane deprivation of life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness,*
 11 *citizenship rights, and cultural heritage; and*

12 *WHEREAS, Although the achievements of African Americans*
 13 *in overcoming the evils of slavery stand as a source of tremendous*
 14 *inspiration, the successes of slaves and their descendants do not*
 15 *overwrite the failure of the nation to grant all Americans their*
 16 *birthright of equality and the civil rights that safeguard freedom;*
 17 *and*

18 *WHEREAS, African American art, history, and culture reflect*
 19 *experiences of slavery and freedom, and continued struggles for*
 20 *full recognition of citizenship and treatment with human dignity,*
 21 *and there is inadequate presentation, preservation, and*
 22 *recognition of the contributions of African Americans within*
 23 *American society; and*

24 *WHEREAS, There is great need for building institutions and*
 25 *monuments to promote cultural understanding of African*
 26 *American heritage and further enhance racial harmony; and*

27 *WHEREAS, It is proper and timely to acknowledge the historic*
 28 *significance of slavery and the abolition of slavery, to express deep*
 29 *regret to African Americans, and to support reconciliation efforts;*
 30 *and*

31 *WHEREAS, The images and words of this memorial will serve*
 32 *to recognize those who have been forgotten, and locating the*
 33 *memorial in Washington, D.C., will give national visibility to*
 34 *those forgotten Africans African Americans and their descendants*
 35 *who labored, suffered, and died as slaves; and*

36 *WHEREAS, A National Slave Memorial will provide an*
 37 *excellent opportunity for our nation to recognize the contributions*
 38 *and sacrifices made by Africans African Americans in our nation's*
 39 *history, and to recognize those who fought to end the injustice of*
 40 *slavery; now, therefore, be it*

1 *Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of*
2 *California, jointly,* That the Legislature of the State of California
3 hereby urges the Congress of the United States to pass H.R. 196,
4 the National Slave Memorial Act; and be it further
5 *Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
6 of this resolution to the Speaker of the House of Representatives,
7 and to each Senator and Representative from California in the
8 United States Congress.

